U. S. War Department

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File No. 48-30

Sub.

WAR CRIMES OFFICE

Judge Advocate General's Office

See also Nos. .....

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U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16—42376-1

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New York Times, May 10, 1945

Bronx Marine Tells How Japanese Hanged Lieutenant in Form of Cross

Wounded Veteran Describes Atrocities in the Pacific as 'Just as Bad if Not Worse Than Those of the Germans'

A young Bronx marine, wounded on Iwo Island and now home for treatment, yesterday told at St. Albans Naval Hospital, St. Albans, Queens, of Japanese atrocities that he witnessed while fighting at Saipan and described as "just as bad if not worse than the Germans."

Pfc. Edward A. Johnston of 3336 Penny Avenue, the Bronx, said he came upon a marine lieutenant hung in the form of a cross and left to die.

"His eyes were cut out, his fingers chopped off and his belly was slit open and then filled with sand," the 21-year-old marine said.

"He was still alive when we got to him."

He said he watched the lieutenant being cut down and aid given to him, which was useless, for "two hours later he died."

Veteran of Three Invasions

A veteran of three invasions, Private Johnston was one of six marine casualties at Iwo who spoke yesterday for the ninety-seven that are at the hospital. The six will be present at ceremonies tomorrow at 11:30 A. M. when the statue of the marines raising the flag at Iwo is unveiled at Times Square for the Seventh War Loan drive.

After talking of the atrocities, Private Johnston said, "I think the Chinese could tell you more about them than I could."

He described the Japanese fighters as "maniacs," saying that "nobody else could pull any of the stuff they do unless they were crazy." He went on, "they would pull a charge on the line and half of them didn't have anything to charge with. They were doped up, in my estimation."

Col. Robert M. Dean of Nassau, N. Y., a suburb of Albany, whose jaw was broken either by an eight-inch shell or 150 mm. mortar—he said he did not know which as he was immediately knocked out—declared he did not think the invasion of Japan would be as difficult as that of Iwo.

Colonel Deane, who at 31 years of age has been in the marines for nine years is a former commander of Samoan troops.

The six marines, all young realists, accepted V-E Day celebrations here philosophically, welcoming the news of the German surrender as an indication of increased air in men and matériel to the forces in the Pacific.

There was no bitterness over the way civilians had celebrated.

"The ones who rejoiced on V-E Day had sons in the European theathre and you can't blame them," said Pfc. Thomas G. McGraham, 20, of 116 Richmond Road, Douglaston, L. I. He was struck by shrapnel on the eleventh day of the invasion. He was in a foxhole with eight men when a shell exploded and killed five of the men. The other three were wounded. Eveuated within one hour, he as well as the rest of the men interviewed, praised highly the medical care they received.

V-E "Didn't Mean Much"

Second Lieut. Robert E. Kling, 23, of 86-02 Sixty-first Avenue, Rego Park, L. I., a prospective bridegroom who said he will be married in late summer to Miss Gertrude Ring of 97-33 Sixty-second Road, Elmhurst, Queens, commented that to him V-E Day "Didn't mean much."

"That a boy?" cheered Pfc. Hyman Kramer, sitting near him. This private, 20 years old, who lives at 429 Kingston Avenue, Brooklyn, had three "slugs" shot into him by a sniper who fired on him after he had dug a foxhole and was preparing to go to sleep.

Private Kramer, who was on his track team at junior high school, was a runner for the command post. After he was wounded he ran 20 yards to the battalion aid station. "You take off when you get hit," he said.

Pfc. Frederick Pfister, 19, of 1730 Victor Street, the Bronx, was on crutches. He had been caught by a sniper who shot him in the thigh when he was trying to run for another position.

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The New York Times - 10 May 1945

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SN- 503321
Casual Co Navy Yd
New York

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We already have this same newspaper story in the files - Put this with it

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CONFIDENTIAL

SPJGI 31 May 1945

SUBJECT: Request for interview and interrogation of Edward A. Johnston

TO: Director, Intelligence Division, Army Service Forces
ATTENTION: Major Tucker, Room 3-E-572, The Pentagon

1. Reference is made to ASF letter, 14 March 1945, SPX 000.5 (13 Mar 45) OB-S-SPINT.

2. It is requested that there be interviewed Pfc. Edward A. Johnston, US Marine Corps, SN503321; home address: 3336 Penny Avenue, Bronx, New York City; present station: Casual Company, Navy Yard, New York, N. Y., and any testimony pertinent to War Crimes that he may be able to give be taken in deposition form.

3. This office has the following information: It is reported that Pfc. Johnston, while on Saipan saw the results of the mutilation by the Japanese of a lieutenant (name unknown), US Marine Corps, that when seen by Johnston the lieutenant was alive, but had been hung in the form of a cross, that his eyes had been cut out, his fingers cut off, his belly cut open and filled with sand. Particular attention should be paid to the identity of the Japanese units opposing the American forces at the time of this incident.

FOR THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL:

MELVIN PURVIS
Colonel, JAGD
War Crimes Office

O'HARE E/pgs

USA War Crimes Office
1 30 MAY 1945

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